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SUBJECT: RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR ON RELATIONS WITH GHANA

**¶11.** (SBU) On November 21, Russia's newly arrived Ambassador to Ghana, Andrey Pokrovskiy, paid a courtesy call on Ambassador Bridgewater. Pokrovskiy noted that Russia is politically active in Ghana and is trying to reengage in Africa generally. He was disappointed that Ghana was not realizing its potential. End summary.

Politically Active, Economically Frustrated

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**¶12.** (SBU) President Putin's recent visit to South Africa and Morocco signaled Russia's serious interest in strengthening ties with Africa, according to Pokrovskiy. He noted that Russia's political interaction in Ghana is "quite active", with demarches and other diplomatic efforts. Russia's diplomatic relations with Ghana began in 1958 and previous assistance included plans to help the GOG prepare to build a nuclear research facility in Accra. After President Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966, Russians were expelled and diplomatic relations were severed (Note: the USSR nuclear research assistance plan was also scrapped, to be taken up later with support from the Chinese. End note.) Russia is now working to recover from this period and reinvigorate its bilateral relationship, Pokrovskiy said. Russia will move into a new embassy in Accra in September, 2007 he said. He expects a delegation from Moscow to Ghana's Jubilee celebrations, although it will probably not include President Putin.

**¶13.** (SBU) Pokrovskiy thought the role of chieftaincy was much stronger in Ghana than in other African countries he knew, adding that chieftaincy disputes are a significant obstacle to Russian investment. He expected Ghana would be more developed, even in African terms. He was disappointed that Ghana was not making the most of its tourism potential. Russia provides up to thirty scholarships each year to Ghanaians to study in Russia, he said.

Bio Note

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**¶14.** (U) Andrey Viktorovich Pokrovskiy was appointed Ambassador to Ghana in July, 2006, after serving four years as Deputy Director and Acting Director of the Security Department of the Russian MFA in Moscow. In 1994, he worked as Deputy Provincial Coordinator of the UN peacekeeping operation in Mozambique. His assignments have included Zimbabwe (1997-2002), Angola (1984-1986), and Mozambique (1979, 1988-1993). He graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the MFA in 1979, the year he joined the diplomatic service. He was born October 2, 1957. He speaks English and Portuguese. He is personable and mild-mannered, and is already active on the Accra social circuit.

BRIDGEWATER